DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 364 958 EA 025 491

AUTHOR Peterson-del Mar, David
TITLE Building Coalitions To Restructure Schools.
INSTITUTION Oregon School Study Council, Eugene.
REPORT NO ISSN-0095-6694
PUB DATE Nov 93
NOTE 55p.
AVAILABLE FROM Publication Sales, Oregon School Study Council, University of Oregon, 1787 Agate Street, Eugene, OR 97403 ($7, nonmember; $4.50, member; $3 postage and handling on billed orders).
PUB TYPE Reports - Descriptive (141) -- Viewpoints (Opinion/Position Papers, Essays, etc.) (120) -- Collected Works - Serials (022)
JOURNAL CIT OSSC Bulletin; v37 n3 Nov 1993

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC03 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS *Agency Cooperation; *Educational Cooperation; Elementary Secondary Education; Family School Relationship; *Parent Participation; Participative Decision Making; School Based Management; *School Business Relationship; *School Restructuring

ABSTRACT

This bulletin describes how schools are building coalitions with parents, businesses, and social agencies as part of their restructuring efforts. Data were derived from a review of literature and interviews conducted with principals, parents, teachers, business people, social workers, and state administrators. Chapter 1 outlines the general principles of collaborative school restructuring. It begins with several theoretical concerns--the reasons for restructuring, types of restructuring, and the relationship between restructuring and collaboration. The chapter then discusses how to determine if restructuring should occur and how to prepare staff and other members for collaborative restructuring. Chapters 2, 3, and 4 examine particular types of coalitions, namely those with parents, businesses, and social-service agencies. Each chapter addresses the types of restructuring projects that schools are undertaking within each group, how such endeavors are initiated and structured, and how to avoid pitfalls. A conclusion is that all three types of coalitions have the potential to change and improve the educational environment. Successful coalitions are characterized by early participation by people outside the school; effective communication; and local, grassroots solutions for local problems. (LMI)

****
* Reproductions supplied by EDRS are the best that can be made *
* from the original document. *
****

ED 364 958

BUILDING COALITIONS TO RESTRUCTURE SCHOOLS

U.S. DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
Office of Educational Research and Improvement
EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)
☑ This document has been reproduced as received from the person or organization originating it.
☐ Minor changes have been made to improve reproduction quality.
• Points of view or opinions stated in this document do not necessarily represent official OERI position or policy.

PERMISSION TO REPRODUCE THIS MATERIAL HAS BEEN GRANTED BY
P. Bide
TO THE EDUCATIONAL RESOURCES INFORMATION CENTER (ERIC)."

David Peterson - del Mar

Oregon School Study Council
November 1993 • Volume 37, Number 3

This issue was prepared in cooperation with the ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management

EA025491

OSSC BULLETIN

BEST COPY AVAILABLE

BUILDING COALITIONS TO RESTRUCTURE SCHOOLS

David Peterson - del Mar

Oregon School Study Council
November 1993 • Volume 37, Number 3

This issue was prepared in cooperation with the
ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management

ISSN 0095-6694
Nonmember price: $7.00
Member price: $4.50
Quantity Discounts:
10-24 copies - 15%
25-49 copies - 20%
50+ copies - 25%

OSSC STAFF

Philip K. Piele, Executive Secretary
Stuart C. Smith, Editor
Linda S. Lumsden, Associate Editor and Production
Audrey Muller, Publications Sales

OSSC GOVERNING BOARD

Dave Cone, School Board Member, Gresham Grade SD 4
Mike Delvin, School Board Member, North Bend SD 13
James Maxwell, Superintendent, Lane ESD
Philip K. Piele, Professor and Executive Secretary, Oregon School Study Council
David Conley, Associate Professor, Division of Educational Policy and Management, University of Oregon
Bill Korach, Superintendent, Lake Oswego SD 7J
Bob Stalick, Superintendent, Greater Albany Public SD 8J
Diane Harr, School Board Member, Oregon School Boards Association

OREGON SCHOOL STUDY COUNCIL

1787 Agate Street
University of Oregon
Eugene, Oregon 97403
(503) 346-5044
Fax: (503) 346-2334

The University of Oregon is an affirmative action, equal opportunity employer.

Preface

These are not pleasant times for most school districts. In Oregon and throughout the nation administrators, board members, teachers, and others are being asked to reform and revitalize their schools with shrinking resources. Building coalitions to restructure schools is a logical and increasingly popular means of doing so. The creation of such coalitions is the subject of this Bulletin.

The author, David Peterson - del Mar, relied heavily on interviews with principals, teachers, parents, business people, social workers, and state administrators in his research. This Bulletin is rich with the voices of experience, people who share both successes and pitfalls, who offer practical, concrete guidance on how school communities can work together to improve their children's education in these difficult times.

This issue of the OSSC Bulletin was cooperatively prepared by OSSC and the ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management (ERIC/CEM) at the University of Oregon. Portions of this Bulletin will be used as a revision of chapter 12, "Building Coalitions," in *School Leadership: Handbook for Excellence*, third edition, ERIC/CEM forthcoming. Additional portions were published in that book's second edition, published in 1989.

Peterson - del Mar lives in Portland, where he counsels groups of men who have assaulted their partners. He received a Ph.D. in history from the University of Oregon in 1993 and is writing a book for Harvard University Press on the history of violence against wives in Oregon. He has written several digests and other syntheses for the ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management and a handbook on superintendent evaluation published by the National School Boards Association.

Contents

	Preface	iii
	Introduction	1
1.	**The Big Picture**	3
	Why Restructure?	3
	Types of Restructuring	4
	Weighing the Decision	7
	Preparing People for Collaborative Restructuring	8
2.	**Building Coalitions with Parents**	11
	General Parental Involvement	11
	Parents in Site-Based Management	13
	Structuring Parent Involvement in Site-Based Management	14
	Trouble-Shooting	16
3.	**Building Coalitions with Business**	20
	General Business Involvement	20
	Collaboration with Businesses in School Restructuring	21
	Benefits of Business Participation in School Restructuring	25
	The Structure of Business-School Collaboration	29
	Trouble-Shooting	30
4.	**Integrating Social Services**	33
	Types of Collaboration with Social-Service Agencies	33
	Focusing on Specific Families	35
	Roles and Responsibilities	36
	Advantages of Working with Social-Service Agencies	38
	Trouble-Shooting	40
	Conclusion	43
	Bibliography	45
	Interviews	47

Introduction

A growing number of people inside and outside of education agree that our schools need to be radically reformed. They cite a wide variety of problems: the inability of many high-school graduates to understand written instructions, construct a persuasive essay, or execute simple mathematical problems; the widespread ignorance of basic scientific, geographic, and historical facts; the widening gap between the skills taught in school and what is required of a modern work force and citizenry; and, finally, the lack of coordination between schools and other educational and social institutions.

These difficulties are exacerbated by several social developments: the growing chasm between rich and poor; rising drug use, poverty, and violence; and increasing numbers of non-English speakers. More and more people of all ideological stripes are asserting that schools can meet these challenges only through restructuring.

But what is *restructuring*? One expert defines it as activities that "change fundamental assumptions, practices, and relationships, both within the organization and between the organization and the outside world, in ways that lead to improved and varied student learning outcomes for essentially all students" (Conley 1993). *Coalitions*, defined as the banding together of schools with outside organizations or groups, are typically part of school restructuring. To be sure, much can be changed and improved when schools work independently to revise curriculum and teaching methods and to decentralize authority and accountability. But many concerns and complaints about public education have to do with its isolation from the wider world. Parents feel that they have only a nominal role in their children's schools; businesses complain that formal education inadequately prepares students for the workplace; social-service providers and school personnel often find themselves working in isolation from, or even contrary to, each other in addressing problems or needs of particular children or families.

This Bulletin discusses how schools are building coalitions with schools, businesses, and social agencies as part of their restructuring efforts.

Parent participation often occurs in site-based councils, where parents and educators work together to restructure their school. Coalitions with business are typically more far-reaching and are affecting the nature of education inside and outside the classroom. Links with social-service agencies are restructuring how schools and the general community serve troubled students and families.

As this Bulletin reveals, such collaborative efforts are under way in Oregon and across the nation. A significant number of schools are already working closely with parents, businesses, and social-service agencies to improve students' educational and social environments. This Bulletin shares their successes. It is also intended to be a roadmap of sorts for administrators, other school staff, and community members interested in building coalitions to restructure schools. Hence it discusses not simply successes, but also pitfalls; not only results, but how people achieved those results.

Chapter 1 outlines the general principles of collaborative school restructuring. It begins with several theoretical concerns: the reasons for restructuring, types of restructuring, and the relationship between restructuring and collaboration. The chapter then discusses how to determine if restructuring should occur and how to prepare staff and others for collaborative restructuring.

Chapters 2, 3, and 4 examine particular types of coalitions, namely with parents, businesses, and social-service agencies. Each chapter addresses the types of restructuring projects schools are undertaking with each group, how such endeavors are initiated and structured, and how to avoid pitfalls.

Restructuring and collaboration are difficult and time-consuming. I am grateful to the many people who interrupted their work to share with me their experiences, viewpoints, and visions. I am sure that they join me in hoping that this publication will contribute to making schools a more integral and effective part of our communities.

Chapter 1

The Big Picture

Restructuring and coalition-building mean different things to different people. A first step to school restructuring, collaborative or otherwise, is to identify precisely why such an ambitious program needs to be undertaken and what forms it might take. Since not all restructuring requires collaboration, the role that people outside the school or school district will play in desired reforms also needs to be considered.

Self-education is the first step in moving toward collaborative restructuring. This fundamental reform is a complex and challenging process that must be thoroughly understood before being pursued. Preparation should include assessing whether the school or district can successfully accomplish collaborative restructuring, identifying incentives for staff and community members to participate in it, and adequately preparing staff members for the changes.

Why Restructure?

As mentioned in the introduction, growing numbers of disparate people believe that public education in the U.S. is in need of a thorough overhauling. Many of the critics of education are conservative. They argue that schools have strayed too far from teaching basic skills like reading and writing and from inculcating traditional values like patriotism and respect for authority. But the thrust for substantive educational reform increasingly comes from people who worry that schools are not meeting the needs of a society and work force in flux, that in many respects schools have erred on the side of tradition, not innovation. For example, a report from the National Alliance of Business faults schools for maintaining the "19th century mass production approaches of industry," of treating "all children as though they were the same" (Edelstein and others 1989).

Social Change

A host of large social changes are nudging schools toward restructuring. Sherritt and Basom (1992) cite several key demographic trends, including Asian immigrants who bring with them distinctive languages and culture; drug-affected, homeless, or impoverished children; and children from single-parent households.

Conley identifies several other broad developments that schools have not kept pace with. He points out that our economy must rise to the challenges of global competition, that even entry-level jobs often require substantial skills, and that the nation's work force, like its schools, is increasingly made up of people of color and women, groups traditionally not well served by public education. Conley also argues that the proliferation of information, the increasing importance of problem-solving, and the interdisciplinary nature of modern problems are making rote memorization and narrow academic specialization obsolete.

The Pressure to Restructure

Conley concludes that business leaders and progressive educators alike want schools to change. Profound restructuring would include:

1. A shift from factual learning to problem-solving, a shift from passive to active learning
2. Performance- or application-based assessment
3. Education that works outside the classroom
4. Cooperative learning, particularly with those different from oneself
5. An effective education for all children, even those with substantial challenges to overcome
6. Mastery of the processes of learning rather than simply a particular discipline's content (Conley)

These goals are at the heart of the school restructuring movement.

In summary, public education is not under fire simply, or even primarily, for failing to teach students reading, writing, and arithmetic. It is being criticized for not keeping pace with profound demographic and social changes and for not preparing children for a world in which communication, flexibility, and problem-solving are central.

Types of Restructuring

School restructuring can cover a multitude of changes, from curricu-

lum to governance, from how students are taught to where they are taught. Yet the literature on school restructuring identifies several components that many efforts have in common.

The National Alliance of Business identifies five broad components for educational restructuring:

1. Site-based management to facilitate "participatory decision-making and a team approach"
2. Increased professionalism through improved training and recognition programs
3. Curriculum and instruction changes that encourage more active and creative learning environments
4. Greater systems of accountability through agreed upon performance measurements
5. The linkage of schools to social services (Edelstein and others)

Decentralized authority and accountability link most of these components.

Focus on Learning Outcomes

Conley contends that school restructuring should focus on "learning outcomes" and cautions against equating restructuring with school-based management: "There is little evidence that wholesale decentralization for its own sake will necessarily or automatically lead to improved learning outcomes." The Education Commission of the States echoes this sentiment. It asserts that the purpose of restructuring is "to improve student achievement" (*Exploring Policy Options to Restructure Education* 1991).

Conley also addresses community involvement, such as the school-community relationship and governance. But his reminders that administrative changes may leave intact an outmoded, ineffective method of instruction serve as a caution to reformers who focus on measures that affect students only indirectly.

The Relationship Between Restructuring and Coalition-Building

Collaboration with the larger community does not necessarily lead to restructuring. A survey of public schools conducted during the 1987 school year reveals that roughly 40 percent of the schools polled participated in some sort of partnership with the larger community. But the great majority of these partnerships apparently had little if anything to do with structural change. The most common type involved providing guest speakers, demonstrations, or equipment, followed closely by offering special awards and incentives for students (Heaviside and Farris 1989). These activities, though

useful and salutary, will not profoundly change the nature of public education.

School restructuring requires collaboration with the larger community when changes in that community make restructuring necessary. Sherritt and Basom argue that schools must successfully confront widespread demographic shifts, for example. "It will take the combined resources and goodwill of all citizens to address the immensely complex issues of plurality in the schools," they remark.

Education cannot ignore broad social problems. A report from the Center on Families, Communities, Schools and Children's Learning asserts that "school reform in these times must reach beyond the classroom and the school house to the home and the community and must focus on children and their multiple and overlapping needs in the diverse parts of their world" (Davies and others 1991). Likewise, the League of Schools Reaching Out identifies "schools, families, communities, organizations and agencies" as "all part of the problem." "An ecological solution to an ecological disaster" therefore "requires that they all must participate in solving the problem" (Davies 1991). Schools require the assistance of the broader community to come to terms with changes that the broader community has ushered in.

Some proponents of school reform emphasize that schools must address social and economic issues that are beyond their direct control. Apple (1991) argues that local control of urban schools unaccompanied by developments like job creation or health care are unlikely to accomplish much. Yet much can be accomplished in schools even without significant structural changes in larger society. Collaborative efforts with business have the potential to both improve students' educational experience and to create postgraduate employment, for example. Cooperation with social agencies can lead to more effective service for troubled students and families.

Such coalitions can strengthen schools' human and financial resources. Broadening education to include extensive and intensive internships in community businesses shifts educational responsibility and expense to a greater number of people and organizations. Collaborating closely with human-service providers can ensure that schools do not duplicate work that might be more appropriately handled by another agency. Parents and other community members who are invited into schools' decision-making processes are more likely to promote adequate educational funding. Given the generally hostile climate toward taxation, these advantages of collaborative restructuring cannot be overlooked.

Schools across the nation are having to do more with less, to restructure the educational environment with static or declining resources. Coalition-building can be an extremely useful, even essential, part of that process. Barbara Fabert, principal at Ackerman Laboratory School in La Grande,

Oregon, recalls enthusiastic community participation when the staff decided to significantly change what and how they taught students. "We couldn't have done it without the parents," she asserts. "Educators can't do it alone," echoes George Dyer, principal at South Salem High School in Oregon. In a time of growing challenges, shrinking resources, and expanding interdependence, educators are apt to choose restructuring as a difficult but necessary step and to identify coalition-building as its necessary handmaiden.

Weighing the Decision

The fact that most schools would benefit from collaborative restructuring does not render such a step essential or even desirable. Institutions can be harmed by attempts that are hasty, ill-conceived, or poorly implemented. Actual collaborative restructuring should be preceded by a lengthy period in which its pros and cons are carefully assessed.

An Immense Task

Conley characterizes restructuring as "a task of Herculean proportions." "Most schools," he notes, "have not acknowledged that there is a gap between their current organizational structure and instructional practices and the needs of society and of students." Examining that gap, let alone bridging it, entails reviewing every aspect of how schools conduct themselves: how authority is exercised, how the learning experience is structured, how knowledge is imparted. Some educators, faced with the daunting prospect of evaluating and perhaps changing deeply ingrained patterns and habits, choose instead to tinker a bit with the existing system and call it restructuring. But measures like recruiting a few parents to serve as classroom aides or adding twenty minutes to the school schedule do not constitute restructuring, do not add up to a profound and thorough shift in how schools educate students.

Since authentic restructuring is so daunting and ambitious, it should only be undertaken if it has sufficient support. Davies identifies "felt need" as a critical variable. The desire for change, he argues, must not come solely from outside interveners or the district office: "Schools that are most successful will likely be the ones where the felt need is more broadly owned and where substantial numbers of teachers, staff, parents, and other community members can agree on the nature of the problems and the needs to be addressed." Restructuring will be more apt to succeed when a broad array of school and community members are convinced of its value.

Preparing People for Collaborative Restructuring

Patience and persistence can overcome disinterest in and resistance to restructuring. Educating the educational community is one of the first steps in pursuing educational reform. A key part of this education is convincing staff and community members that they will benefit from restructuring.

Building a coalition typically means starting small and gradually expanding. Natural allies are the first logical group to contact. Next, gain the support of people and organizations likely to be affected by restructuring and then reach out to people and groups potentially interested in the changes, such as civic organizations (Thomas, Hart, and Smith 1989). Gradual expansion from a relatively unified core ensures that the group will not grow too large too fast, that its vision will not become so fractured and contradictory that the movement collapses.

Benefits to Participants

In building coalitions it is important to identify the benefits of participation. Many benefits are intangible. Being part of a successful group effort brings its own rewards, such as a sense of shared accomplishment and the satisfaction of cooperative problem-solving. Improving public education benefits the entire community: Students, staff, families, and employers are the most obvious beneficiaries. An investment in children's education is truly an investment in general community welfare.

But coalition-builders should not neglect more particular and concrete incentives for community participation. Parents have an obvious interest in improving their children's education. Social workers may be att acted by the prospect of offering school-based family services and collaborating with their counterparts in other agencies, efforts that may increase effectiveness and lower costs. Business is becoming increasingly frustrated by workers' low skills. The National Alliance of Business (Edelstein and others) cites the example of a clerk who "authorized paying $2,200 on a $22 claim because she did not understand decimals" and an electronics firm that spends $250 per employee on simple quality-control skills that Japanese workers understand with little or no training. School restructuring can bring a host of tangible benefits.

Both self-interest and altruism cause a broad variety of people outside the school to take an interest in school restructuring. But these people will not necessarily volunteer to assist in the reform process. One of the primary tasks of those leading reform efforts is to identify people outside the school who have an interest in restructuring, let them know how they will benefit from a broad program of change, and invite them into the process.

Building Internal Support

Building support for collaborative restructuring within the school demands a different approach from building external support. By definition, collaborative restructuring involves profound changes in lines of authority and communication. Resistance to such changes is only natural. Resistance can be minimized by working closely with staff and other parties to ensure that participation and ownership of the changes are broadly shared and agreed upon.

The Education Commission of the States (*Exploring Policy Options...*) suggests three major preliminary steps in initiating restructuring: establish a vision, review existing policies, and debate options. The first step, establishing a vision, typically entails convening a broad range of constituents to discuss why change is needed and then creating a statement that conveys the vision to the community. The next step, reviewing current policies, requires an honest assessment of how these policies mesh with the vision statement.

The third step, discussing options, consists of networking with others who are further along in the restructuring process, viewing or reading materials that illustrate the desired changes, and identifying policy changes that will need to be made for the vision to be realized. These steps are time-consuming. But going slowly and including a broad range of people enhance the probability of creating broad agreement and participation in the reform process.

Minimizing Resistance

Other steps can also maximize participation and minimize conflict. First, any formal group set up to initiate and guide the restructuring process should have representatives from all interested parties. Overrepresentation of central-office personnel is apt to discourage participation by parents, community members, and school-based staff. Meeting at neutral or rotating sites can serve to underscore the shared ownership of the restructuring effort. Training in conflict resolution will facilitate a consensus style of decision-making, which is desirable in collaborative efforts. Participation by parents and other community members will be facilitated by encouraging general contacts between these people and the school, such as offering school-based community events (Thomas, Hart, and Smith).

As authority becomes decentralized, administrators are apt to feel obsolete and perhaps resentful. Reformers can ease administrators' concerns by identifying the important, if less authoritarian, roles that such personnel will play within the restructuring process. Central-office personnel will need to perceive and articulate the district's big picture, facilitate other people's work, serve as liaisons between various groups within the district, and assess

the ongoing effectiveness of restructuring. Principals, too, will find themselves moving from authoritarian to supportive roles. This transition, if properly defined and valued, can be seen as a positive one (Conley).

Faculty participation is critical to successful restructuring. Conley urges policy-makers to help staff "understand how they will be able to survive and succeed in the new environment." He offers ten areas that faculty should commit to before school structures are changed:

1. Using data to make decisions
2. Creating an environment of continual self-examination and professional development
3. Identifying problems in the learning environment and committing to help all students succeed
4. Viewing children as being first human beings, then students
5. Learning and using a wide range of teaching methods
6. Discarding ineffective or irrelevant methods
7. Accepting parents and other community members as equal partners in education
8. Broadly sharing staff decision-making
9. Establishing within the school an agreed upon vision of education
10. Committing to assist adults in the school community who are threatened by changes in the school and, in return, obtaining the cooperation of these people

This is a long list, and eager reformers are apt to be frustrated by resistance from teachers, administrators, and parents. But efforts to convince such people that restructuring is both desirable and feasible is time well spent. Schools that are more decentralized and collaborative will not function effectively unless the majority of participants view the restructuring process as helpful.

Chapter 2

Building Coalitions with Parents

Parents participate in a broad range of school activities that do not radically change the educational environment. Yet parents constitute an obvious interest group and resource to be considered and utilized in any major school-improvement efforts. This chapter addresses various roles parents play in restructuring efforts, how to procure parent involvement in school restructuring, the dynamics and workings of school-based councils that include parents, and possible pitfalls to parental involvement in school restructuring.

General Parent Involvement

As mentioned above, parent involvement in school restructuring is only one aspect of parent involvement in the schools. Elementary schools in particular commonly utilize parent volunteers as cafeteria workers, classroom aides, or hall monitors. They also encourage home-based parent participation in student learning.

Collaboration with parents is essential in addressing the needs of students in impoverished or non-English-speaking families. The faculty at one innercity elementary school began their reform process by adopting three principles: "The school should be central to the life of the community; the resources of the school should be flexible and subject to change determined by the needs of children and families; the school should reach out to parents, enlisting their help and advice in the education of the children" (Stone 1993). Several steps facilitated parent involvement: hiring multilingual office staff and classroom translators, providing child care and snacks for parents attending school functions, and offering weekly meetings in Spanish

for parents. Parents helped create an afterschool program to enhance students' reading and math skills. The program was operated by community organizations and a preschool staffed by paraprofessionals and parent volunteers.

Parents in Schools

More educators are discovering the benefits of bringing parents into the school. At Ackerman Laboratory School in La Grande, Oregon, a group of parents helped to establish a parent room in the school and a parent resource section in the library. Parents also produce weekly fliers in which teachers report on student activities and homework assignments requiring parent participation, and parents give surprise gifts and lunches to school staff throughout the year.

Roosevelt Middle School in Eugene, Oregon, depended on about ninety parent volunteers to register students in 1993. Principal Dan Barnham notes that the school's intensive use of parents means that "they are in the inside, knowing what is going on." Parents' onsite assistance literally makes them part of the school.

Parents are much more likely to be present in elementary and middle schools than in high schools. South Salem High School in Salem, Oregon, is an exception. Parents at South Salem not only volunteer in such traditional areas as dramatic productions, but function as hall monitors, tutors, and mentors. Twenty-five to thirty adults with strong skills in math, science, foreign language, or some other discipline tutor students who need additional help. Another fifteen to twenty serve as mentors, a broadly defined role that includes counseling and advising students in their academic, vocational, and personal lives. Such programs make meaningful parent and community participation possible at the high-school level.

Utilizing parents as tutors or mentors or creating a parent room does not constitute restructuring. But such efforts open up the school environment to community participation and concerns. They also create a climate in which parent involvement becomes commonplace and opinions of parents are actively solicited and carefully considered. In Oregon, an organization called Parents Plus was formed in 1993 to facilitate this development. One of its three stated missions is to "promote student success through family and community involvement in education." Marilyn Higgins of the Oregon Department of Education recalls that the group formed as a result of widespread concern by parents and other community members across the state over how they could participate in improving and reforming their schools.

In Oregon, as in most states, parents have not been in the forefront of the restructuring movement. But growing parent participation in school

activities and the formation of organizations like Parents Plus indicates that parents are a growing force in school reform.

Parents in Site-Based Management

Most school restructuring efforts include decentralizing authority from the district office to the schools and from principals to other members of the school community. It is in this process, in site-based management, that parents typically wield the greatest amount of formal power.

National Examples

In some districts, parents have worked within centralized power structures to restructure education. In one locale, for example, a small but very vocal group of reform-minded teachers, parents, and students established three alternative schools (Keedy 1992).

In a few districts, parents have assumed the dominant role in school governance. For example, in the late 1980s school governance in Chicago passed into the hands of boards composed largely of parents. This radical transformation occurred only after extensive meetings, debate, and lobbying with the state legislature. It was also the child of several distinctive conditions: repeated and divisive teacher strikes, widespread documentation and agreement that Chicago's public schools were failing their students, dissatisfaction by the business community over the pace and nature of previous reform efforts, widespread skepticism that the school board could lead a successful reform movement, and a solid and varied organizational base (O'Connell 1991). School districts that do not effectively educate students and that do not invite parents into the reform process risk losing control of that process to angry parent and community groups.

Palanki and Burch (1992) argue that parent involvement in school-based management is an integral part of school restructuring. "Shared decision making," they assert, "empowers the people most directly involved in children's lives to work together for the benefit of all children." "School restructuring," they continue, "has the potential to give families and communities access to the resources needed to participate in the real improvement of school programs." But Palanki and Burch also note that only a few states' plans for restructuring "appear to give much priority to involving parents in important planning, policy making, or decision-making roles." Overall, districts have not distributed substantial formal authority to parents or other community members.

Oregon's School Councils

Oregon schools have recently formed school councils on which parents are represented. By law, the councils must include a majority of teachers, as well as an administrator, another staff person, and a parent. Very few school councils, then, include more than one or two parents. "People would love to be on their site councils, but there just isn't enough room," remarks Marilyn Higgins of the Oregon Department of Education. Hence parents who are on the councils must create and cultivate communication networks with other parents. Kathy White, program coordinator for the Oregon Professional Development Center, notes that parent representatives' link to the broader community is "an important thing that needs to evolve."

Parent participation on school councils seems to be proceeding well in Oregon. "I think the whole idea of including parents in the decision-making process is exciting," remarks Peggy Upham, a parent representative on the Roosevelt Middle School's school council in Eugene. She finds that the combined perspectives of parents, administrators, teachers, and students benefit the council and school. There is also a good working relationship between the teacher majority and parent minority. The parents on the council—two regular members and one alternate—regularly report back to the school's parent council, an organization of about twenty parents who meet monthly.

Jan Baxter, principal at Gresham's Hollydale School, said she has "always believed in shared decision making," a belief that has facilitated relinquishing some authority to the school council. "I think site teams are going to be a marvelous tool for educating parents," she adds. Baxter notes that the benefits cut both ways, for parents "may have a legitimate concern" about school reform that staff have overlooked.

John Miner, principal at Sam Barlow High School in Gresham, Oregon, also emphasizes the advantages of school councils. Staff often learn from parents, and parents find school less mysterious when a process "actively involves them in setting a direction for the school." This involvement by parents helps to ameliorate parent resistance. Miner notes that he "can go back to the values and beliefs" that parents helped to develop if parents subsequently question the changes they helped to initiate.

Structuring Parent Involvement in Site-Based Management

Parent participation in school-based management presents the school community with a variety of opportunities and challenges. The decisions that must be confronted include selecting parent representatives, working out

a functional meeting process, and coordinating school-based management with other structural changes.

Conley notes that reversing the twentieth-century trend of centralized authority in schools requires conscious effort: "Since many parents have in essence relinquished the education of their children to professional educators and since the schools have put in place many of the barriers to parental involvement, it appears that schools will need to begin the process of reaching out." The large gap that separates parents from staff members in many schools must be bridged if parents are to become an effective part of site-based management.

Recruiting Parents

There are many ways to begin and maintain the outreach process. Creating or strengthening parent volunteer programs is an obvious first step. But staff must go beyond simply getting more parents into the school building. They must build a reservoir of parents who are informed about school improvement and restructuring. A pair of schools in Boston and New York hold joint seminars in which teachers and parents read and discuss articles on collaboration ("Success of All Children Through School-Family Community Partnerships" 1990). Some Oregon principals meet regularly with parents to discuss ongoing issues and concerns. Such meetings provide ideal opportunities for parents to inform principals of larger community developments and for principals to educate parents about school restructuring. Schools that facilitate parents' knowledge about education reform have a ready-made, eager group of people to draw on when moving toward site-based decision-making.

Oregon schools follow a variety of formats in selecting parents for their school councils. The parent council at Roosevelt Middle School, which is open to any parent who wishes to join, elects its school council representatives. Other possible arrangements include election or appointment of parent representatives by school staff or a blending of the electoral process, in which teachers choose council members from a slate of candidates selected by a parent group.

Getting Started

School councils often move slowly and carefully so that group harmony and shared understanding can be fostered. The Roosevelt Middle School council votes only after ample discussion. Members often postpone a vote and do further research if they sense that consensus has not been reached. Barbara Fabert recalls telling a restructuring committee at Ackerman Laboratory School in La Grande, Oregon, where she is principal,

that "you need to go back and do your homework" when they called upon her to break a tie. The committee responded by surveying parents, faculty, and students on the question in dispute and then, with this added information, reaching consensus. Such steps take time, but they build cohesion and facilitate implementation of committee decisions.

School councils' initial activities vary according to a site's progress in the school reform process and other factors. South Salem High School's school council has recently focused on educating other participants about its activities, on opening up communication channels. Peggy Upham recalls that her tenure on Roosevelt Middle School's parent council began with reconciling budget requests with limited funds. Ideally, councils ease into such decisions, but circumstances may dictate otherwise.

Ackerman Laboratory School's restructuring program was already well under way when the Oregon Legislature mandated the creation of school councils with parent representation. Seeds for the school's restructuring effort were sown during a 1991 retreat that focused on multiage classrooms. It included several committees, each of which had at least one parent, with a total of some thirty-five participants. The heads of each committee eventually constituted Ackerman's school council, an organization that knit together the original restructuring effort with the state-mandated framework. This effort created a substantially altered educational environment: students learn in mixed-age classrooms, instruction has shifted away from conventional academic disciplines to thematic and integrated topics, and computers are intensively utilized in the educational process. Parents were key players in this reform effort.

Trouble-Shooting

A topic as broad and ill-defined as school restructuring is bound to be well populated with pitfalls. These hazards are multiplied when parents contribute their many, often contradictory, concerns and agendas to the process. Successful parent participation in school restructuring requires careful attention to the needs of parents, administrators, and staff, and to the new ways in which all parties interact.

Miner urges principals and other restructuring leaders to realize that "change is personal" and that fear of change is natural. He says that staff typically exhibit enthusiasm for change in the abstract, but that resistance or even sabotage can emerge as people realize what change will actually entail. Leaders who anticipate and understand this process will be better able to deal with it. Frequent and effective communication is perhaps the best antidote to fear of change. "You can't communicate enough," Miner asserts. He also urges leaders to see change as systemic and as "an evolution rather than an event." Structural change is the result of a long series of small steps; the

change process should be accompanied by frequent dialogue.

Broad Participation

Fabert urges educators to "involve parents right from the beginning" of the restructuring process. At Ackerman Laboratory School, where Fabert is principal, this meant holding brown-bag breakfasts so that parents could discuss reform with her on their way to work, creating opportunities for parents to visit other schools, and ensuring that parents were well represented on school-reform committees. Fabert advises administrators not to give up on parents who are hostile to reform, for parents "need to feel ownership" of restructuring efforts. Likewise, Marilyn Higgins of the Oregon Department of Education urges schools to invite parents in at the very beginning of their reform process, so "we all learn together instead of creating gaps."

Administrators and teachers may be tempted to stack the restructuring deck with their own pet projects and ideas before inviting parents or other constituents into the process. Principal Dan Barnham notes that staff often fear people coming into the school who "are going to tell you what to do." But when all groups are included from the beginning, the process is truly collaborative; every member has an equal opportunity for input and therefore members are more apt to be satisfied with and supportive of the results. As Barnham puts it, "I get a feeling of 'we' rather than 'you versus me'."

Broad participation can also shield principals and staff from undue influence by a few overbearing parents. Miner recalls that school-improvement teams at his high school posted parents' ideas on the wall and participants then attached post-its next to the ideas to identify the most popular ones. This practice "took the mystery out of the process" of reform and brought credibility to it. Strong-willed parents with unworkable plans were told "no" not by a single principal or other authority figure, but by their peers.

Jan Baxter, principal at Hollydale Elementary, ensures that parent representatives on her school's council are individuals "everyone can work with." "You can't have someone come in who is going to try and run the school," she adds. She selected the first parent representative, a woman who had already worked closely and successfully with school staff. The school's parent group chose the second parent representative. Giving parents a voice in selecting such representatives and being sensitive to staff needs helps to ensure that parent council members will be individuals who work well with others.

The Principal's Role

In the process of most models of school restructuring, much of princi-

pals' formal authority is distributed to staff and parents. George Dyer, principal at South Salem High School, asserts that principals have to confront the question of whether they are "willing to give up some power." "The best way to end power struggles . . . is to empower people," he adds. But that empowerment necessitates a major shift in how most principals have traditionally functioned.

Dyer also emphasizes the necessarily ambiguous nature of significant school reform. Collaborative school restructuring means starting down a river whose course is unclear. "I'm not sure where all of this is going to go," Dyer remarks. There is uncertainty about how authority in restructured schools will ultimately be wielded and what principals' precise role will be. Overseeing such a process requires faith in the restructuring process and in the people to whom authority is being distributed. It also requires the self-confidence to accept and even abet the weakening of one's formal authority.

Maintaining Unity

School councils are likely to be fragile at first. They can gain strength and cohesion by easing into their role gradually. Major decisions should be postponed until members have created an environment of trust and respect. Specific training sessions might focus on topics like conflict resolution or various modes of problem-solving. Councils must decide how they are going to run their meetings and make decisions. Misunderstandings over such matters can effectively hamstring a council's ability to exercise authority.

Councils must also find their niche in districts' decision-making structure. They will share power with the school board, superintendent, principal, and perhaps various advisory committees and parent organizations. Councils must not consider themselves miniature school boards, bodies that set policy without intimate and ongoing contact with staff members, parents, and students. As in so many other areas of restructuring, intensive communication with a variety of people and interest groups is central to the success of school councils.

Teachers and parents are the two groups who most obviously gain authority in a decentralized, school-based authority structure. But rivalries between the two groups are possible. As discussed earlier, reformers do not agree on which group, if either, should dominate the site-based councils. In Chicago, it is the parents. In Oregon, as in many other places, it is the teachers. On this question, as Conley points out, two strands of reform contradict each other: increased authority and professionalism by teachers versus increased authority by parents. This theoretical contradiction does not have to lead to conflict, however.

Peggy Upham, a parent on Roosevelt Middle School's school council, advises others in similar positions to ease into their new duties gradually.

Initially, they should "go and listen": "Don't go in with the notion of changing everything." She also urges parent members on school councils to not "go in with an agenda," but to cultivate an open and receptive mind on issues. Taking this approach, Upham has found it easy to work with her council's teachers and reports no tension between the group's parents and teachers.

Upham's experience appears to be broadly representative of the attitudes of parents on Oregon's school-based councils. Such parents tend to be both supportive of school reform and respectful of the teachers' and principals' expertise.

Other parents, generally less active in school affairs, are more hesitant about school restructuring. Principal George Dyer remarks that parents on his school council favor high schools changing to keep up with larger social changes. But another group believes that schools should remain the same, and expresses concern that their kids might "be the guinea pigs in this grand experiment" of school reform. Scott Perry of the Oregon Department of Education observes that parents are "vastly diverse"; some want schools to keep pace with technological developments and employment requirements, while others are disturbed over such innovations as cooperative learning activities and new types of report cards. The latter group of parents often fears a decline in core reading, writing, and math skills. Carol Evans, a parent involved with Ackerman Laboratory School's restructuring, reports that some parents are confused by homework assignments that require parent participation.

In Oregon, parents seem more likely to oppose school restructuring efforts than to initiate them. But Marilyn Higgins of the Oregon Department of Education identifies common ground shared by reformers and parents: "People like the idea of meeting the individual needs of kids." Flexibility toward specific children's educational requirements is both a key component of school restructuring and a widely shared value among parents. The success of collaborative restructuring depends in large part on identifying such areas of common ground, opening up general channels of communication and service between the school and the community, educating a broad range of parents about the need for and nature of school reform, and inviting parents to serve as full-fledged members of the restructuring team.

For Principal Barbara Fabert, parent participation has been an essential part of school restructuring. It has given parents "a better understanding of what happens here" and increased their support of the school and their understanding of how their children are doing in school. Teachers treat parents "as professionals, as equals," and parent support and appreciation of teachers have been integral to school staff maintaining their morale in the face of a statewide budget crisis.

Chapter 3

Building Coalitions with Business

Members of the business community are often closely involved in school restructuring. This involvement springs in part from their concern over the quality of education, from their desire for a better-educated and more effective work force.

Educators and business leaders alike want education to become more practical and better integrated with the working world. This chapter examines general business concern and involvement with education, types of restructuring programs that include business, the benefits and structure of such programs, and trouble-shooting in building coalitions with business.

General Business Involvement

The business community is interested in public education from a variety of perspectives: as taxpayers, as employers who rely on employees' skills, and as general community members. These overlapping concerns help to explain the leading role business often plays in school restructuring.

As discussed in chapter 1, businesses across the U.S. are increasingly concerned with workers' education. A significant proportion of employees lack basic reading, writing, and mathematical skills. Furthermore, even entry-level jobs often require collaborative or independent skills rather than following simple orders. Employees with solid traditional educations often lack the flexibility that such work demands. Business is therefore interested in both improving and changing education.

High schools often train their entire student body for careers that only a minority will pursue. A recent study conducted at Roosevelt High School in Portland, Oregon, found that the school's curriculum focused on preparing

students for liberal arts colleges and universities, but only 19 percent of the student body ended up attending such institutions. Not surprisingly, Roosevelt had high rates of absenteeism, suspensions, expulsions, and dropouts. Students who graduated were often ill-prepared for the job market.

One major goal of school restructuring is to better prepare students for the actual work they will do. Employers, of course, have an interest in ensuring that the emerging work force can perform the tasks and fulfill the roles that business will require.

Business Involvement

Business involvement in the schools can assume many forms. The Education Commission of the States (*Exploring Policy Options to Restructure Education* 1991) identifies several: serving on curriculum reform committees, providing in-kind services, offering students opportunities to learn about business, making available paid leave time for employees to assist in their children's education, running for the school board, and participating in district advisory committees. Businesses can also recognize exemplary teachers and schools. Beginning in 1991, for example, Associated Oregon Industries has given $1,000 awards to sixty schools, teachers, and principals.

Businesses often offer their expertise to schools by donating particular skills. Starting in 1985, a San Francisco project entitled Think/Write began teaming teachers and volunteers from the business community with professional writers whose employers released them for the project. The writers train the volunteers and teachers in writing and critical thinking skills, such as brainstorming, multiple drafts, and group critiques. The teachers and volunteers then team up to teach in a classroom (*Partnerships That Work!* 1989). BellSouth upgrades principals' management skills by providing leadership training that is similar to training received by their own executives (Ashwell and Caropreso 1989).

Willamette High School in Eugene, Oregon, distributes a brochure listing several ways that businesses can provide oncampus assistance: teaching lessons on topics such as the relevance of algebra to the workplace, providing guidance in resumé writing and interviewing, teaching an entire course, and providing modern business equipment. Businesses can assist schools in a variety of ways that may or may not be part of a larger program of school restructuring.

Collaboration with Businesses in School Restructuring

Business involvement with school restructuring increasingly includes

sustained and intimate involvement with the process itself. Much of this involvement occurs outside the classroom, as businesses provide a variety of job shadows, internships, apprenticeships, and focused job experiences to students. These activities are linked to the schools both by collaboration between school and work site and by curricular changes within the schools.

Job Shadows and Work Experience

In Oregon, collaboration with business is becoming an integral part of general school reform. At Willamette High School in Eugene, for example, all ninth-grade students entering in fall 1993 will be required to do a job shadow in which they spend a day alongside a worker in a field that interests them. By 1995, all students will be required to participate in a structured work experience. This could be a cooperative endeavor in which the student is paid for a job outside the school that is related to her or his academic work, or it could be a youth apprenticeship. Another option for students is to select internships with local businesses or organizations. A few students are already participating in apprenticeships in which their work hours contribute toward adult certification in such fields as metal fabrication or electrical work.

Roosevelt High School has also inaugurated a set of collaborative activities with business that are being implemented on a schoolwide basis. Ninth-grade students explore six broad career pathways, in part through one-on-one interviews with employees and job shadows. Some 93 percent of them completed job shadows during the 1992-93 school year at fifty-four businesses or organizations. By eleventh grade these students will be participating in short-term work experiences, experiences that become more substantial during their final year in high school. Increasingly, schools are making some sort of structured work experience part of their graduation requirement.

Roosevelt High School's work-experience program emphasizes personal contact and responsibility. According to René Léger, Roosevelt's business partnership coordinator, much of the program's success hinges on students "being with an adult one on one" and on student initiative. Successfully completing the job shadow necessitates four steps on the students' part: calling to confirm the shadowing appointment; watching, listening, and interviewing while on the job shadow; filling out a reflection sheet on how the experience affected them; and writing a thank you note to the person they shadowed. In sum, the program pairs the excitement of a fun opportunity with the work and responsibility of following through on several well-defined steps.

South Medford High School also has a comprehensive business pro-

gram that was recently honored as the outstanding secondary vocational education program in Oregon by the Oregon Council of Career and Vocational Administrators ("South Medford High Business Program Is Tops in State" 1991). As well as integrating academics with vocational classes, "this program has expanded the use of technology, provided quality training sites for cooperative work experience, used advisory committees, and has developed partnerships with business," noted Donna Clement, business instructor and division leader at South Medford.

And two work-experience projects in Washington County also illustrate the potential positive impact of school-business partnerships ("Industry Student Retention Programs Meet with Success" 1993). The projects at Tigard and Beaverton high schools use adult mentors in the workplace to impress upon at-risk students the importance of finishing high school if they want a fulfilling career. "The outcome of the projects is supposed to demonstrate to the students the relationship between staying in school and developing sufficient skills to be able to compete in the world of work and earn a living wage," says program manager Shoshana Baluer-Miller.

The two projects grew out of industry-specific task forces that studied and addressed student retention issues on their industry. In one project, students from Tigard spend four hours a day, three days a week working in various publishing- and printing-related positions. In the other, Beaverton students work in the health-care industry five days a week. At Tigard the project has significantly improved classroom performance of participants. Whereas before the project only 16 percent of those selected for the project at Tigard were passing all their classes, now about half are passing all classes. Also, the percent of Tigard project participants failing two or more classes has dropped from 76 percent to 34 percent.

The projects are sponsored by the Washington County Student Retention Advisory Committee, "a consortium of businesses and education and social service organizations devoted to reducing the dropout rate as well as providing a more educated workforce."

Business in the Classroom

Willamette and Roosevelt high schools are changing the structure and content of education by integrating work experiences with education. This integration is also occurring within the classroom. At Willamette, for example, students working in apprenticeships take a course that prepares them for the work experience, particularly for the human relations aspects of employment. Schools are adding courses that are more career focused, including classes on computers, marketing, and nursing. Instruction offered in such courses is enhanced by summer internships for teachers in local businesses. At Roosevelt High School, teachers have interned at an aero-

space company, hospitals, a labor union, a utility company, and high-tech companies. Such bridges between the business and education communities ensure that what is taught within school walls will keep pace with what occurs in the workplace.

Collaboration with business is also affecting traditional courses, as all aspects of the curriculum become more application-oriented. Math teachers are using examples drawn from building trades, and English teachers help students to write persuasive business letters and to focus on practical communication skills. At Roosevelt High School, teachers in traditional academic fields shape assignments to students' pathway choices: for example, history instructors assign papers on the history of business or medicine. "More and more academic areas are finding ways that students can learn from work experience," remarks Mary Helen Socolofsky, a business teacher at Sprague High School in Salem, Oregon. This is precisely the sort of cross-disciplinary learning that so many educational reformers champion.

An innovative program in the Greater Albany Public Schools called Access Albany is also having an impact on curriculum. Developed by Curriculum Director Marcia Swanson and Business-School Partnership Director Kathy Schrock, in 1992 the program gave teachers from six schools the opportunity to spend up to a week working in a chosen industry. Seven Albany-area businesses served as sites where the teachers gained their real-world experience. As well as gaining on-the-job experience, the participating teachers attended a class that taught them more about the business environment and developing curriculum. Teachers then produced classroom-ready activities in math, science, and technology intended to help students to see the local, real-world applications of what they are learning in the classroom. The collection of classroom activities was published in a booklet, also called Access Albany, and distributed to math, science, and technology teachers around the district. Another outcome of the project, note Swanson and Schrock, was that it gave teachers an enhanced ability "to assist in the design of internship and work experience opportunities" ("Teachers Take Learning from Area Business to Classrooms" 1992).

At many sites, business participation has moved far beyond providing guest speakers to schools on career days. For example, at Sprague High School, owners of a local photography business instructed marketing classes on their business and then helped students work up advertising displays and conduct a market survey. The business people "can really speak from experience" on such subjects, remarks Daisy Steele, marketing instructor at Sprague. Commercial Bank has an ongoing relationship with Sprague: Students actually operate a branch of the bank within the high school. This work includes concrete activities like operating a teller machine and balancing the bank's books. It has also entailed chartering the bank; selling 1,800 shares of the bank at one dollar each; and serving on the bank board, which

includes bankers and teachers as well as students. The bank will eventually offer loans. The project attempts to expose students to the "full gamut of banking," remarks Cora Hallauer, Commercial Bank's senior vice president. That sort of exposure would be virtually impossible without the collaboration of an outside business.

Cellular One, a telecommunications company, and Grant High School of Portland have also collaborated on an extensive project that has largely occurred within the school's walls. Cellular One provided an internship for a teacher and lent its expertise in helping to develop and teach a new communications curriculum. Part of the course consists of the class dividing into smaller groups; each group represents a specific company. Students in each company fill specific company positions. The students then have five weeks to develop a plan to start the company successfully, which includes meeting with their actual counterparts at Cellular One. The project closes with students presenting their plans to Cellular One employees. This program involves interaction on several different levels and exposes students to experiences not available in a conventional classroom.

Collaborations with business need not be on such a grand scale, however. Wendy Sorey, counselor and business teacher, has started a program at Echo High School in Echo, Oregon, which has only fifty-nine students in its top four grades. Most of the students come from agricultural or blue-collar families in a community with few employment opportunities. Many are not headed for college. Sorey has established several partnerships with local businesses in which students' work is related to both career goals and to school. For example, the students write reports on their work experience and receive evaluations from their work supervisor. Their work is overseen both by an onsite supervisor and by Sorey.

Coalitions with businesses are becoming an integral part of school restructuring. They typically involve hands-on learning about a vocation through actual work experience, applied learning through reworking of the school curriculum, and outcome-oriented evaluation through utilizing student reports and observing student performance. Inviting businesses into the classroom and taking instruction into places of business are restructuring students' educational experience.

Benefits of Business Participation in School Restructuring

Business participation in school restructuring offers many benefits for both parties. It facilitates a host of other reforms, all aimed at making the educational experience more relevant and interesting. Business also benefits in many ways, not the least of which is playing a role in educating the people who will eventually enter the work force.

Benefits to Schools

The business community can be a potential resource to those planning school restructuring. A report by the National Alliance of Business notes that business went through its own time of "crisis and intense introspection, which. . . often resulted in restructuring." "Business thus has a history, a recent institutional memory of the implications and complexities of restructuring" (Edelstein and others 1989). The report notes specific contributions that business can make to schools in the restructuring process, including developing goals and objectives, conducting analysis and planning, building coalitions and partnerships, leveraging support, fostering new approaches, and applying new technology. In many respects, businesses differ from schools. But the two also share some characteristics, and the former's experience with restructuring, planning, and training can be a valuable resource.

Businesses are contributing to school reform by serving on various restructuring committees. Many schools have advisory committees of business people who have contributed their ideas to a high school's business courses. Business participation is now going far beyond that role to include work on committees that oversee a broad array of student experience in the workplace. Other committees utilize business people to help rewrite curriculum so that students' school and work experiences are integrated and students are better prepared for vocational life after high school.

Benefits to Students

Students often profit from business involvement in school restructuring in very immediate and concrete ways. Structured work experience is proving extremely beneficial. Wendy Sorey, counselor and business teacher at Oregon's Echo High School, recalls that she started thinking about implementing such a program "because there were students who knew what they wanted to do." She cites the example of a student who wished to go into nursing. Arranging for this student to work in a nursing home "gives him a little taste of what nursing would be like" and "reinforces his dreams." By the same token, notes Sorey, such work experiences can reveal to students that their dream is founded on misperceptions and cause them to reconsider their plans. Work experience gives students the opportunity to try out potential career choices in a controlled setting.

Even brief exposure to an occupation can clarify career goals. A Roosevelt High School student who planned to become a veterinarian changed career goals after shadowing an actual veterinarian for a few hours. Such experiences can either confirm or overturn long-term plans, thus saving the student from spending many years and thousands of dollars preparing for a profession they will not enjoy.

Vocational experience can make school more stimulating. Education becomes not simply a long series of lectures, memorization, and exams but a format in which one explores career options and develops skills necessary for particular jobs. Roosevelt High School's job shadowing program boosts student self-esteem as it exposes them to the job world. "You could see them come back more confident," remarks René Léger, business partnership coordinator. As a result of the job-shadowing experience, students can imagine themselves performing the actual tasks in a given occupation. Indeed, 73 percent of surveyed students ranked the program as "very effective."

Students respond similarly to longer term projects. Mary Helen Socolofsky of Sprague High School remarks that the students who work in the school's bank have a "sense of ownership" in it. Cora Hallauer, senior vice president at Commercial Bank, notes that "there are some real excited students" because of the project. Donna Acord, business partnership manager for the Portland School District, remarks that a business partnership at Grant High School made school "something fun and interesting" and got students "excited about learning math and science." By the time they reach high school, student interest is often limited to socializing, dating, and athletics. Business partnerships are injecting a sense of excitement into the core of the educational experience.

Bill Braly of the Oregon Department of Education emphasizes the broad benefits of work experience. "I don't think the occupation kids initially focus on needs to tie them down," he states. Braly cites a program in which students were given work experience and targeted for technical degrees at community colleges. But working in a large organization with a variety of career possibilities stimulated the students' ambitions, and most of them chose to continue their educations at four-year colleges. Simply exposing students to a broad spectrum of workers performing their jobs makes the issue of vocational choice more relevant and immediate. In turn, the education required to attain a specific career goal assumes greater importance and relevance. Education becomes a necessary part of gaining the skills required to be an engineer or a nurse, for example, not just a set of hoops that must be negotiated on the path to adulthood.

Braly also points out that extensive work experience often shifts students' peer-group associations. Students become socialized not just by their peers, but by adults whose careers and skills they hope to emulate. This sort of adult socialization, which may in effect be informal mentoring, has obvious, potent ramifications for such problems as juvenile delinquency, teen suicide, and truancy. Business partnerships often entail students' working as a team, as with the Cellular One project at Grant High School. This better prepares students for jobs that are becoming increasingly collaborative and

adds a sense of shared responsibility and accomplishment to an educational experience that is typically competitive rather than cooperative.

Benefits to Business

Business has become increasingly interested in school reform. Claudia Leppart of the Oregon Department of Education states that "we have a business community that is very excited about what we are doing." Socolofsky, an educator who has worked with businesses for two decades, has "really noticed a difference over the years as I've worked with the business community." In the past, relations between the two were almost adversarial. The tide turned about five years ago, although "at first they didn't know how to help and we as educators didn't know what to look for." Both parties' sustained interest in coalition-building and restructuring created a variety of partnerships.

Business can directly benefit from training students. Socolofsky remarks that "businesses are looking for good employees" and that most businesses she approaches respond with statements like "We need good workers" or "We want to help the schools." Cora Hallauer, senior vice president of the bank that Socolofsky works with at Sprague High School, said that "community involvement" is the main incentive for her participation. Although Hallauer said she is "not sure there's any monetary advantage," she hopes that the project "will give us better employees down the road."

Such projects often benefit companies in more subtle ways. Acord reports that Cellular One believed that its collaborative project not only constituted "a long-term investment in their work force," but that it would demystify cellular communications, thereby making students more comfortable using the company's product. The company also believed its work force became more productive and more positive about the company as a result of working as a team to provide a service to the broader community. Finally, students often identified solutions to company problems that were both fresh and promising, generating ideas that may prove to be of substantial practical import.

Intensive, large-scale collaboration by businesses in education can bring substantial and tangible results over time. Security Pacific in Los Angeles began such a program in 1975. It trains about 4,000 students a year as tellers, computer operators, credit checkers, and other types of positions. It then "has first choice at recruiting those you have trained" (Ashwell and Caropreso 1989). Indeed, Security Pacific hires about 20 percent of the high-school graduates it has trained.

In sum, collaboration with business often brings substantial benefits to

schools, students, and businesses. It is one of the most popular types of collaboration that schools are pursuing.

The Structure of Business-School Collaboration

One of the most difficult aspects of business-school collaboration in school restructuring is getting it started. Businesses are far removed from many schools and may be initially disinterested or at least unaware of how they can help. But there are a variety of steps that both schools and businesses can take to foster school-business cooperation in restructuring efforts.

Early Involvement

Roosevelt High School in Portland began restructuring its school and its relationship to business by forming a committee that included representatives from the business community. A wide variety of people from industry and labor groups, as well as teachers, administrators, parents, and students, then began shaping the project. Teams were formed to address such areas as curriculum, public relations, and teacher internships in businesses. Hence businesses participated in both the general and the specific planning stages.

Businesses can also play a major role in overseeing collaborative efforts. At Sprague High School, for example, bankers as well as students and teachers sit on the board of directors of the school's bank; the board oversees the bank both as a business and as an educational tool. At Eugene's Willamette High School, business people have served on curriculum committees and on an ad hoc committee overseeing school-business partnerships.

Smaller schools may maintain relationships with the business community through less formal channels. Wendy Sorey requires her students at Echo High School to do some of the legwork in placing themselves in a job. She then talks with students' supervisors to ensure that the work will dovetail with students' specific educational and vocational goals. "The supervisors are taking on a teaching position," she remarks. Sorey maintains communication through informal, ongoing contact.

Larger schools, in particular, find that there are many advantages to involving representatives from businesses in the restructuring process right from the start. In the first place, this practice increases the sense of ownership that businesses will have in the process. It also encourages comprehensive business participation in restructuring, not simply by offering partnerships, but by helping to reform the curriculum, for example. Finally, businesses that have helped to create a new vision of education are more apt to be eager participants in implementing that vision, such as by offering internships to teachers and learning opportunities for students. The contribution of

businesses to school restructuring is often related to how much authority and influence the business community is permitted to have in the process.

Recruitment

Providing job shadowing, internships, or paid work experience for a large proportion of a school's students requires an ambitious recruitment plan. Staff and students at Sprague High School make presentations to the Chamber of Commerce, Rotary, and other civic or business groups. They distribute cards outlining the ways that businesses can contribute. The businesses then return these cards to the school, indicating the type of school involvement they are interested in.

Business people, as well as educators, may take the initiative in forming restructuring coalitions. The National Alliance of Business cautions business that "it needs to show it understands the business of education and that it is genuinely concerned about the education of all youth" (Edelstein and others). Larger efforts at school restructuring, it advises, are best accomplished through existing business or civic organizations rather than through a single company. The alliance recommends creating a comfort zone between business people and educators and proceeding deliberately with the restructuring process.

Schools usually must initiate collaborative efforts with business. Including businesses as fully as possible in the restructuring process helps to ensure effective and enthusiastic school-business collaboration.

Trouble-Shooting

Collaborative restructuring by schools and businesses has the potential for conflict and damage as well as cooperation and achievement. These dangers can be avoided if both parties are sensitive to each others' roles and perspectives.

Pitfalls

Not all educators welcome businesses' participation in education. Conley notes that "many educators have strong feelings that their central purpose should not be to prepare workers." Apple seems uneasy with what he terms an "immense pressure throughout the country to make the goals of business and industry into the primary, if not the only aims of schooling." In some parts of the U.S., business has effectively wielded power against education leaders in the political arena. Businesses played a major role in the coalitions that diffused authority to parents and other community members in Chicago, for example. Boston's business community decided in 1987 to

withdraw substantial financial support if education leaders did not respond to their concerns.

Educators' fears or hesitations about business involvement in school restructuring should not simply be dismissed. Quality education prepares individuals for a life of learning and exploration outside as well as within one's vocation. Not all learning should be judged by how well it prepares students for a career, let alone a specific career. Furthermore, a free society requires that its citizens acquire the skills to criticize its institutions as well as to function within them. Hence public education necessarily involves exposure to ideas and perspectives that business leaders may find irrelevant or even dangerous.

Apple argues that "larger relations of power must always be considered if we are serious in our attempts to understand the complicated politics of education." He urges educators to let "a more cooperative and democratic ethic" guide education. Such an ethic is not necessarily antithetical to business partnerships. Apple urges partnerships with worker-owned or worker-managed businesses, for example. Schools can also pursue collaborative relationships with local government agencies and various nonprofit organizations. School-business partnerships and the democratization of the workplace need not be at odds.

Friction and misunderstanding with school staff can also be minimized. The National Alliance of Business urges business people to learn all they can about education before participating in major reform efforts (Edelstein and others). Part of this learning process entails recognizing ways in which business and education differ. For example, business must accept education's inability to control its raw material or to divest itself of unprofitable activities or divisions. The alliance also suggests that business leaders must adjust to the public nature of schools' decision-making, to the large number of people who must be consulted before substantive educational changes are made, to how slowly meaningful changes in student achievement will occur even under optimal conditions, and to how difficult it is to measure many types of learning. In sum, businesses must not simply attempt to impose their values and practices onto schools.

The National Alliance of Business also lists common misconceptions that educators have about business: that business wants to control schools, that businesses' solutions to education's problems are simplistic, that business methods cannot be applied to education, and that business is interested only in lowering taxes and school budgets. Staff cynicism and closed-mindedness can hamstring even the most promising collaborative efforts.

Communication

Early collaboration is one way to defuse tension between business and

schools and to create joint ventures that both parties will support. Cora Hallauer said that these ventures must be based on "a true partnership" in which both parties are actively involved. "It's a process as opposed to a procedure," she explains. Close and sustained work on the larger aspects of school improvement will alleviate tension over its particulars.

Work-based learning succeeds only when expectations for students and businesses alike are spelled out. To offer a student a position that will meet her or his particular educational requirements, employers "have to design something rather than plugging them into an existing job," notes Acord. Businesses will probably not gear a position to a student unless they are told how to proceed, and without such tailoring the work experience loses much of its potential value.

Creating effective partnerships requires a substantial commitment of resources. Sorey recommends that teachers interested in establishing partnerships with businesses "do a lot of research" and be prepared to work "a lot of extra time." Socolofsky points out that "someone from the school has to take responsibility" for student promptness, dress, and performance in the workplace and for ongoing oversight of the program and communication with businesses. Roosevelt High School trains its students in making telephone calls, interviewing the workers they will be job shadowing, and writing thank you notes before they job shadow. Léger argues that without such training, "we're setting them up to fail." Maintaining a successful program of job shadowing or work experiences takes considerable staff time.

Communication is a key to success. Sorey encourages educators to "look for parental support" of the job placement, since parents might become upset if they are left out of the planning process. Socolofsky notes that some business people are concerned that students will steal from or otherwise take advantage of them. She allays these fears by emphasizing that participating businesses can interview any student interested in a job shadow and turn down students they do not feel comfortable with. Including businesses in the educational process increases the number of players who must be consulted and informed and makes communication more important than ever.

Setting up such collaborative ventures entails some risks and substantial costs. Schools already hard-hit with staff reductions will find it particularly difficult to initiate shadowing, employment, or internship programs that are substantive and effective. But such programs have strong potential for reforming and energizing education, for underscoring the importance of classroom instruction and linking it to the broader world of work.

Chapter 4

Integrating Social Services

Parent and business participation in school restructuring tends to focus on academics. These two groups are largely concerned with what is taught, how it is taught, and where it is taught, as well as with decentralizing schools' decision-making.

Coalitions with social-service agencies are of a different nature. Counselors, social workers, and health providers inside and outside of schools are coming together not to reform the curriculum or to sit on site councils, but to pool their resources to better serve troubled families. These professionals typically serve only part of a school's population, focusing on the most fragile and troubled members. In recent years, families that have special needs have become a larger portion of the school community. The effective provision of health and human services eventually leads not only to stronger and safer families, but to improved student performance in the classroom. Children who are chronically sick, malnourished, or abused will not flourish in even the most stimulating schools.

This chapter examines the nature and benefits of coalitions between schools and social-service agencies, as well as the roles that various parties play in them and the pitfalls that successful programs avoid.

Types of Collaboration with Social-Service Agencies

Schools and social-service agencies are working together in a variety of ways. Most projects, however, share some common characteristics: active participation by several agencies, sharing information about clients and coordinating service delivery, and identifying the school as a key player in the cooperative effort.

Overview

Guthrie (1991) identifies four forms that collaboration can take:

1. Having a case manager within a school district who coordinates agencies' services
2. Locating agencies at a school
3. Having frequent meetings between agencies and schools to share information
4. Creating an advocacy group that acts as a broker to meet identified needs

Melaville and Blank (1991) distinguish between *cooperative efforts* that coordinate existing services and *collaborative programs*. "Far more than simply creating greater access to existing services," they write, "a collaborative strategy enables participants. . . the opportunity to fundamentally alter existing services." According to this definition, cooperation entails refining existing services, and collaboration means restructuring existing services.

Melaville and Blank give as an example a collaborative arrangement in Ventura County, California. The project goal was to join the mental health department, school district, juvenile court, and child welfare department to provide the best possible care at a low cost to severely mentally impaired youth. This entailed reformulating jobs and programs. "Instead of simply co-locating mental health personnel on the school grounds," Melaville and Blank explain, "the project puts therapists and teachers together in the same classroom where they jointly plan, implement, and evaluate each students' learning plan." Parties internal and external to the school literally combined forces.

Increasing numbers of Oregon schools are cooperating and collaborating with social-service agencies in a variety of ways. East Multnomah County's Caring Community project has initiated one popular type of program: the so-called "one-stop shopping" model. Centennial, Gresham, and Reynolds school districts are each establishing a social-services office in one of their elementary schools. Centennial's Harold Oliver Elementary School's center is staffed by representatives from Adult and Family Services, Mainstream (a drug and alcohol treatment organization), Children's Services Division, Multnomah County Mental Health, and the Education Service District's health division. Integrated school-based social services are more convenient for parents; such an arrangement also encourages service providers to share information and to coordinate their services.

Roosevelt High School in Portland has taken a slightly different path toward cooperation and collaboration. At Roosevelt, a single program coordinator employed by Multnomah County and partially supported by Oregon's Department of Human Resources works full-time at a school to serve parents, in part by accessing several agencies. Representatives of the agencies come to the center a few hours a week, during which time they are

available to meet with parents. The program coordinator may also choose to bring together social-service representatives and a family to collaborate on a plan for that family. A school social worker is assigned to do home visits. Roosevelt's flexible plan offers a variety of modes for collaborating in service provision.

Focusing on Specific Families

Some projects emphasize integrating services to particular families. Representatives from several agencies and Morrison Kindergarten in Dallas, Oregon, one of several participating schools in the Polk County project, meet once a week to plan for and work with families in crisis or considered to be at risk. School staff identify some of the families, but others are self-referred. Polk County chose this model over an ongoing "one-stop" format in part because its agencies lacked the personnel to maintain a daily presence in the schools. But its focus on particular families provides intensive assistance not necessarily present in one-stop-shopping formats.

Hermiston's program is based in a separate building because none of the city's crowded schools could house it. In this arrangement, three family advocates funded by several social agencies work with families to create solutions to poverty, illness, unemployment, and other problems. Staff from the agencies have also devised a form that consolidates information needed by various agencies. This means that clients fill out only one form rather than several. Both the Polk County and Hermiston projects emphasize intensive team decision-making and service provision for particular families.

The Polk County and Hermiston projects also emphasize family involvement in the planning and helping process. Vickie Boer, principal of Morrison Kindergarten, notes that the team of providers bring together families so that all parties can assess clients' strengths and establish goals. This sort of participation leads to "empowerment of families," she notes. Twila Schell, volunteer program manager for the Department of Human Resources, likewise notes that the Hermiston providers try "not to make decisions for the family." "We need to teach these clients to be self-sufficient," she adds, a process that is more likely to occur when families play a major role in setting treatment goals and are then held accountable for accomplishing their part of the treatment plan. Coordinating social services facilitates client involvement in the problem-solving process.

Not all collaborative or school-based programs of social-service integration have as their goal the inclusion of parents in goal setting and problem solving. But such goals are more likely when agencies cooperate with each other and the schools rather than offering piecemeal services to clients in isolation from each other.

One advantage of school-based social-services arrangements is that they bring a variety of experts into the schools to assist teachers and other school staff. The Linn-Benton Education Service District accomplished this goal through creating a handbook. The project began soon after a student committed suicide. Several people wondered if the school could have done more to avert the tragedy. Education Service District staff met with local agencies to discuss putting together a handbook on how to respond to similar situations in which the school and community agencies shared responsibility. The handbook's first five topics are local resources, suicide, child abuse, substance abuse, and truancy. The handbook is updated annually, a process that serves to maintain contact between the schools and the agencies (Linn-Benton Education Service District 1991).

Cooperative ventures between schools and social agencies can assume a variety of forms. The type that a particular community chooses depends on many variables, particularly the availability of agency personnel to work at school sites.

Roles and Responsibilities

Working with social-service agencies often brings a more intimate and thorough program of interaction than do other types of collaboration. Agencies are being asked not simply to donate a few hours of time, but in many cases to devote entire positions to the collaborative effort and to place personnel off-site, in the school. This level of commitment requires clearly defined roles and responsibilities for all players.

Initiators

Billie Bagger, service integration project manager at Adult and Family Services, notes that most collaborative efforts begin with a school district superintendent or a social-service agency manager convening a meeting on a broad school problem, such as dropout rates or drug and alcohol use. The representatives at such meetings typically decide that "it's going to take all of us to figure out the answer," she notes. With this realization, collaboration begins in earnest.

Specific Oregon programs support Bagger's generalizations. At Roosevelt, teachers did a study that identified access to social services as a major problem. A larger group including leaders from school, business, social agencies, and the rest of the community concurred. A team of parents, teachers, administrators, and social service providers then drew up a plan. In Hermiston, the collaborative process grew out of quarterly meetings of social

agencies that identified client overlap as a persistent and expensive problem. "It grew out of a real desire to do a better job for clients with the same resources," notes Twila Schell, volunteer program manager for the Department of Human Resources. "We had to work together to do it," she adds.

Donna Middleton, director of human services for Polk County, initiated planning for social-service integration after receiving frequent complaints from school staff about caseworkers. She began by inviting forty to fifty people to a meeting at which they discussed the present social-service delivery system, barriers to more effective service, and solutions to the problems. The Polk County project grew out of that meeting.

Such meetings often result in a list of broad goals. A national forum on the dropout issue in Canada included the following objectives for collaboration between organizations and coordination of services:

- develop a directory of all industries, professional groups, and youth service agencies within a school area
- promote local schools as the place for collaboration
- create school climates that welcome personnel from those agencies, in part by allocating space in schools for them
- jointly identify service gaps and overlaps
- plan for pooling resources
- draw up an inventory of skills of all agency personnel
- ensure rewards for all parties
- provide opportunities for teachers to take part (Neufeld and others 1992)

A list of such objectives can provide a roadmap that helps to ensure the orderly and thorough pursuit of collaboration.

Variables

Melaville and Blank identify several variables that affect interagency partnerships. The first is community climate. No single model of collaboration can be imposed on diverse communities. Communication and problem-solving constitute another key variable. Participants must share a common vision, and the involvement of all players is essential to creating that corporate vision. Of course, human resources are integral to forming effective partnerships, and staff must be trained in "the principles of sharing and consensus building that collaboration requires" (Melaville and Blank). People from different organizations must also learn to use terms that mean the same thing to all participants. Finally, schools' willingness to include the program in such key documents as school goals and job descriptions will help to ensure lasting reform.

Leadership is a key variable in collaborating with social-service agencies. Having a single, high-profile leader may mobilize support and streamline the planning and implementation process. But such projects often lack deep support and may falter if the leader leaves or becomes preoccupied with other matters. "Don't try doing this alone," advises Donna Middleton, director of human services for Polk County. Leadership need not come from within the school. Shared leadership has the advantage of avoiding burnout and giving several participants a strong sense of ownership in the project (Liontos).

Indeed, the integration of social services in schools is often a model of truly cooperative leadership and broad participation. In Hermiston, for example, clerical workers devised the form that the agencies now share. Although the service-delivery site is not located in a Hermiston school, Schell, volunteer program manager for the Department of Human Resources, reports that the schools are an integral part of the project. "They have access to information" that agencies lack, she notes, and they "help us reach those families before they get into really bad situations." For the schools, the program provides a place to refer families in crisis.

Necessity is often the parent of agency-school collaboration. Wendy del Mar, a social worker with the Centennial School District, notes that meaningful participation from all players has been essential in the East Multnomah County project because "nobody had extra funds." The school donated space, and agencies are redistributing caseloads on a more regional basis to free up staff time. Since no agency or school could perform the project alone, it could only succeed if each did its part.

Not surprisingly, oversight of cooperative programs tends to be widely shared. Representatives from each participating agency typically sit on the planning and oversight committees. In Polk County, an umbrella committee of twenty-five to thirty people with representatives from all participating agencies monitors the four school projects.

Advantages of Working with Social-Service Agencies

Cooperation and collaboration between schools and social-service agencies offer compelling advantages for all participants. Schools are better able to utilize community resources, agencies are able to provide more efficient services, and families save time and are better served.

Melaville and Blank cite several ways social-service agencies typically fail children. Most agencies, they state, are crisis oriented, treat individuals rather than families, seldom communicate with each other, generally cannot construct effective solutions to complex problems, and are not sufficiently funded. Melaville and Blank argue that "schools . . . offer a critical point of

access to outside services and often provide an ideal location for many kinds of assistance offered in one-stop shopping formats." Coordinated services are a solution to many of the problems that children and families experience with social-service agencies.

Advantages to Schools

Integrating the provision of social services to students helps schools in many ways. The East Multnomah County project emerged from concern over the dropout rate. Leaders decided, in del Mar's words, that "a lot of the reasons for kids not finishing school had to do with things going on in the family." "It's hard for a child to learn when her or his basic needs aren't being met," she explains, such as when students stay home because of not having their shots. Bagger identifies three goals for Oregon's Department of Human Resources' integrative projects: keeping students in school and successful there, enhancing parents' employment and earning capacity, and successfully maintaining clients in the community. Student achievement and family well-being are closely related.

Integrated, school-based social services can be particularly important in districts hard-hit by cutbacks. As a result of budget cuts, the small Fall City School District recently lost several teachers, its high school principal, and all but one counselor. Polk County social agencies have taken up much of the slack by weekly team visits to Fall City.

"So often human-service professionals don't have an opportunity to work together," notes Middleton. Integrating social services and locating them in the schools can greatly increase these professionals' efficiency. Schell reports that collaboration has eliminated duplication of effort. Multiagency meetings and conferences have enabled providers to "work well together" to increase efficiency. The agencies should ultimately save staff time and agency money through cooperation and collaboration.

Advantages to Families

Agency cooperation better serves the needs of families and schools, not just helping professionals. It saves parents a lot of time. Rather than going to several agencies—a particularly difficult task for parents with jobs or preschool-age children or without automobiles—parents can simply make one stop at their child's school. Families also benefit when several providers pool their knowledge to help them achieve satisfaction, stability, and, hopefully, independence. Cooperation among agencies may identify services that are needed by brothers, sisters, or parents of a troubled student. As Stone notes, "siblings begin to receive help, even if they are in a different school"

when families are treated as a whole rather than as isolated individuals. Coordinated, collaborative services can reduce family and individual crises because they serve to connect families and siblings to services before major problems erupt.

Schell cites a particularly vivid example of how Hermiston's integrated services program helped one family. A large family had been evicted from their home and members were living outside with no shelter. The father had recently been arrested and imprisoned, and the mother had several severe undiagnosed medical problems. The team worked with the family and other members of the community. The father soon returned, health-care providers treated the mother, and the family received public assistance and counseling. Schell noted that without this intervention the children in the family would certainly have entered foster care. Instead, the family is together and district teachers "can't believe it's the same children they saw last year."

Schools lack the resources to address such widespread problems alone. Coalitions with social-service agencies bring necessary resources into the schools. They also enhance and streamline agencies' delivery of services.

Trouble-Shooting

Integrating social services in schools involves many players, and therefore has the potential to be very divisive. Clear communication is essential to avoiding this problem.

Early Participation

Participants in integration projects commonly identify early participation by all interested parties as a key to success. "Get everybody at the table at once," Donna Middleton said, "so everyone buys into the project." Early, widespread participation may initially slow down and complicate decision-making, but in the long run it will help ensure a broadly shared sense of purpose and commitment to the project.

Many agency representatives are ripe for collaboration. In East Multnomah County, recalls Wendy del Mar, everyone was "ready, they were wanting the same thing," because "everyone was so frustrated in their agencies because things weren't working." It is essential for everyone to "come to the table with the ideal of flexibility, the ideal of doing things differently, the ideal of improving the system." In the Centennial District, where del Mar is a social worker, parents were involved in planning both through membership on the planning committee and through a questionnaire that asked

parents to identify which services they would use in the school.

A program planned from the top down, without the involvement of parents or teachers, is likely to encounter resistance when it is implemented. Stone mentions a school that began a program of integrated social resources only to find that some school staff resented it because they viewed it as "the superintendent's pet project." Staff even refused to share student information with the social-service providers. Those left out of the planning and implementation process are likely to resist.

Broad Participation

Supervisors can avoid much friction not only by including a broad spectrum of players in the planning process, but by anticipating potential resentments and fears. The Linn-Benton Education Service District identifies several key differences between social agencies and schools, such as schools' mandate to provide services to all children in the community and to respond even when "faced with a student situation that is beyond the scope and function of its educational purpose," such as suicide. Agency staff may have reservations about working with schools. They may fear job overload, losing control of cases, or even surrendering their agency or professional identity (Liontos). These worries will not go away simply because one wishes them to; they must be addressed.

Liontos presents several ways to address such concerns. These steps include listening to and addressing staff worries; helping staff to feel a sense of ownership in the project by involving them in the early stages of planning; perceiving resistance not as an obstruction, but as a sign of people coming to terms with collaboration; and creating a liaison position to work between agencies and schools. Empathy, patience, and communication will allay many difficulties.

Grassroots Planning

It is wise to look at a variety of service-integration programs early in the planning process. Ron Reilly, director of Roosevelt Cluster Schools, recommends examining materials from other programs such as San Diego's New Beginnings and, for Oregon schools, working closely with the Department of Human Resources. Then, he notes, "you build your own [program] with your providers." Bagger concurs: "Don't take a project that worked somewhere else and try to duplicate it." The best projects are sensitive to the characteristics of their particular community.

Bagger urges planners to conceive bold and creative projects. They should also think holistically, to bear in mind the entire family's needs rather

than the needs of one or two members. Del Mar identifies flexibility as a strong planning trait. "Look at doing things completely differently," she advises, such as having agency providers in the school at night. "You need to be able to think of the possibilities," she concludes. Collaboration with and between social-service providers offers a wealth of possibilities that are only beginning to be explored.

Service integration should bring efficiency in the long run, but getting to that point requires many resources. Such projects require a "huge investment of time," states Bagger. "It's going to take more time to get it started than you'd like it to," adds Reilly. Staff from agencies and schools alike will be disappointed or angry if they do not realize how long and involved the planning process will be. Informing all players early in the planning process about what they are getting into can help to minimize this problem.

Much frustration can be avoided by starting small. "Plan, but start something," Bagger suggests, for "you lose people in a long planning process." Likewise, Boer advises people to "not expect too much too soon," to "start out small because there are a lot of things to work out." Melaville and Blank urge planners to set "attainable short-term objectives, especially in the beginning. . . to create a sense of accomplishment and build momentum." They add that "sufficiently ambitious long-term goals will help to capture the interest of funders and ensure that momentum is maintained." Wise planners, then, will offer relatively simple but useful short-term projects without losing sight of more lengthy, substantive goals.

Problems like suicide, homelessness, unemployment, and drug abuse can no longer be defined as irrelevant to education. These issues and others hinder student achievement in every public school. Yet schools lack the resources to singlehandedly solve such entrenched, family-based problems. Integrating social services at school sites or in cooperation with schools seems to be the most effective approach, particularly when services are shrinking in many places. Collaboration also serves to more closely knit the school, the community, and its families together. It breaks down institutional barriers and has the potential to be an important component of school restructuring.

Conclusion

This Bulletin examines three distinct aspects of creating coalitions for school restructuring: collaboration with parents, businesses, and social-service agencies. These three endeavors diverge in many ways. School-parent collaboration typically takes the form of participation in site-based councils, a type of participation that is ideally fleshed out by a close relationship between parent representatives and parent groups. School-business restructuring often gets more at the heart of school reform by transforming the actual educational experience inside and outside the classroom.

Collaboration with social services has relatively little direct impact on how schools distribute authority or go about educating students, but it restructures the way the entire community provides services to troubled students and families. It has the potential to enhance greatly students' and families' broader educational, social, and economic environment.

All three types of coalitions have the potential to change and improve the educational environment. All three underscore that meaningful collaboration is a useful, even essential, part of successful restructuring. Parents need not be involved intimately in school restructuring or site-based management, but their participation brings a unique and very useful perspective to the school and ensures a broader, more democratic process. Schools can make themselves more responsive to the requirements of a changing economy and society without working with representatives from business, but such work makes possible a broad range of educational work opportunities for students and teachers alike and brings the expertise of specialists to both the classroom and to curriculum reform. Finally, schools can attempt to improve the social services that they offer students without cooperating or collaborating with social-service agencies. But shrinking budgets and the breadth of modern social problems offer little chance of success. At the very least, coalition building is an extremely useful component of school restructuring.

Several themes connect these three types of coalitions. Successful coalitions are truly collaborative. They succeed best when parents, business

people, and social-service agencies are invited into the planning process from its inception. To be sure, this sort of inclusion brings with it certain risks. On the whole, school staff are the best prepared to oversee school reform, and participation by ill-informed people from other sectors can cause substantial damage. But relatively few collaborative efforts seem to be hindered by such people. Most collaborators respect school staff and are eager to work cooperatively. Collaborators are most apt to participate fully and energetically when they are treated with trust and respect. The substantial resources wielded by parents, business people, and social-service workers cannot be fully tapped unless they are made full partners in the endeavor.

Communication plays a key part in bringing together the diverse actors who can make coalitions succeed. Effective communication is essential to any successful set of changes. People want to contribute to identifying and solving problems, and they want to know how their roles will change once reforms are in place. The need for communication multiplies as the number of actors increases. Business people and teachers need to understand each other before they can collaborate. So do welfare workers and school counselors. This communication takes time, and it is no guarantee that misunderstandings and even conflicts will not hamstring a worthy project. But communication greatly enhances any project's chances for long-term success.

A great deal of the communicative process should center on creating programs that are suited to a particular community's strengths, limitations, and general characteristics. Finding local solutions to local problems is a key element in most school restructuring theory. Decentralization commonly accompanies reform. This is one of the reasons that school-based management is often an integral part of school restructuring. Successful restructuring, then, depends not on the successful adaptation of some universal model. It depends on widespread participation in creating a program of reform that will meet the needs of a particular school or district. The very process of collaboration creates the new structures through which authority, learning, and problem-solving flow. The medium of collaboration, carefully and sensitively applied, creates new structures that will reinvigorate our schools, perhaps even our communities.

In summation, three main themes surface repeatedly in the literature on forming coalitions for school restructuring and in interviews with Oregonians participating in coalitions: early participation by people outside the school; effective communication both within the school and between the school and others; and local, grassroots solutions for local problems. The future of our schools and much more hangs in the balance. It is up to all of us, working together, to find and apply the solutions.

Bibliography

Apple, Michael W. "The Politics of Curriculum and Teaching." *NASSP Bulletin* 75, 532 (February 1991): 39-50. EJ 421 363.

Ashwell, Andrew, and Frank Caropreso, eds. *Business Leadership: The Third Wave of Education Reform*. New York: Conference Board, Inc., 1989. 74 pages. ED 320 219.

Conley, David T. *Roadmap to Restructuring: Policies, Practices and the Emerging Visions of Schooling*. Eugene, Oregon: ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management, 1993. 445 pages. ED 359 593.

Davies, Don. "Testing a Strategy for Reform: The League of Schools Reaching Out." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, Chicago, April, 1991. 29 pages. ED 331 178.

Edelstein, Frederick S.; Esther F. Schaeffer; and Richard J. Kenney. *A Blueprint for Business on Restructuring Education*. Washington, D. C.: The National Alliance of Business, Inc., 1989. 51 pages. ED 312 486.

Education Commission of the States. *Exploring Policy Options to Restructure Education*. Denver, Colorado: Author, 1991. 95 pages. ED 332 323.

Guthrie, Larry F. *School Improvement for Students at Risk*. San Francisco: Far West Laboratory for Educational Research and Development, 1991. 32 pages. ED 342 135.

Heaviside, Sheila, and Elizabeth Farris. *Education Partnerships in Public Elementary and Secondary Schools*. Washington, D.C.: National Center for Education Statistics, 1989. 53 pages. ED 304 789.

"Industry Student Retention Programs Meet with Success." *OSSC Report* 33, 3 (Spring 1993): 15.

Keedy, John L. "Exploring Political Coalitions in School Restructuring: Results from the Field." Paper presented at the Annual Meeting of the American Educational Research Association, San Francisco, April 1992. 33 pages. ED 349 643.

Linn-Benton Education Service District. *At-Risk Youth in Crisis: A Handbook for Collaboration Between Schools and Social Services. Volume 1: Introduction and Resources*. Albany, Oregon: Linn-Benton Education Service District

and Eugene, Oregon: ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management, 1991. 66 pages. ED 330 025.

Liontos, Lynn Balster. *Social Services and Schools: Building Collaboration That Works*. Eugene: Oregon School Study Council, University of Oregon, November 1991. OSSC Bulletin Series. ED 343 264.

Melaville, Atelia I., and Martin J. Blank. *What It Takes: Structuring Interagency Partnerships to Connect Children and Families with Comprehensive Services*. Washington, D.C.: Education and Human Services Consortium, 1991. 57 pages. ED 330 748.

Neufeld, G. Ronald, and others, eds. *Local Planning Process and Model Goals and Objectives. Stay in School Initiatives, Book 3*. Kingston, Ontario: Canadian Council for Exceptional Children, 1992. 39 pages. ED 350 780.

O'Connell, Mary. *School Reform Chicago Style: How Citizens Organized to Change Public Policy*. Chicago: Center for Neighborhood Technology, 1991. 48 pages. ED 342 842.

Palanki, Ameetha, and others. *Mapping the Policy Landscape: What Federal and State Governments Are Doing to Promote Family-School-Community Partnerships*. Baltimore: Center on Families, Communities, Schools and Children's Learning, 1992. 82 pages. ED 343 700.

Adams, Don, ed. *Partnerships That Work!* Chicago: World Book, Inc., 1989. 108 pages. ED 310 485.

Sherritt, Caroline, and Margaret Basom. "Reflecting Community Diversity in the School." *Viewpoints* 120 (September 1992). 14 pages. ED 351 299.

"South Medford High Business Program is Tops in State." *OSSC Report* 32, 1 (Fall 1991): 14.

Stone, Calvin. "School-Community Collaboration: Comparing Three Initiatives." Madison, Wisconsin: Center on Organization and Restructuring of Schools, June 1993. 17 pages. ED 358 549.

"Success for All Children Through School-Family-Community-Partnerships." *Equity and Choice* 6, 2 (Winter 1990): 21-5. EJ 409 735.

"Teachers Take Learning from Area Businesses to Classrooms." *OSSC Report* 32, 3 (Spring 1992): 19.

Thomas, John, and others. "Building Coalitions." In *School Leadership: Handbook for Excellence*, second ed., edited by Stuart C. Smith and Philip K. Piele, Eugene, Oregon: ERIC Clearinghouse on Educational Management, 1989, pages 272-90. ED 309 516.

Interviews

Donna Acord, Business Partnership Manager, Portland Public Schools. Telephone interview September 30, 1993.

Billie Bagger, Service Integration Project Manager, Adult and Family Services, Oregon Department of Human Resources, Salem. Telephone interview September 28, 1993.

Dan Barnham, Principal, Roosevelt Middle School, Eugene Public Schools. Telephone interview September 22, 1993.

Jan Baxter, Principal, Hollydale School, Gresham Grade School District 4. Telephone interview September 27, 1993.

Vickie Boer, Principal, Morrison Kindergarten and District Chapter One Coordinator, Dallas School District 2. Telephone interview October 4, 1993.

Bill Braly, Specialist, Construction/Manufacturing/Apprenticeship Programs, Oregon Department of Education, Salem. Telephone interview September 21, 1993.

Wendy del Mar, Social Worker, Centennial School District, Portland. Interview September 27, 1993.

George Dyer, Principal, South Salem High School, Salem/Keizer School District 24J. Telephone interview September 22, 1993.

Carol Evans, Parent, Ackerman Laboratory School, La Grande School District. Telephone interview September 22, 1993.

Barbara Fabert, Principal, Ackerman Laboratory School, La Grande School District. Telephone interview September 22, 1993.

Cora Hallauer, Senior Vice President, Commercial Bank, Salem. Telephone interview September 28, 1993.

Marilyn Higgins, Volunteer Development Coordinator, Oregon Department of Education, Salem. Telephone interview September 16, 1993.

René Léger, Business Partnership Coordinator, Roosevelt High School, Portland Public Schools. Telephone interview October 4, 1993.

Claudia Leppart, Specialist, Professional Technical Education, Oregon Department

of Education, Salem. Telephone interview September 21, 1993.

Donna Middleton, Director of Human Services, Polk County. Telephone interview October 5, 1993.

John Miner, Principal, Sam Barlow High School, Barlow-Gresham School District UH2-20J. Telephone interview September 27, 1993.

Andrea Newton, Assistant Principal, Willamette High School, Bethel School District, Eugene. Telephone interview September 29, 1993.

Scott Perry, Specialist, School Reform, Oregon Department of Education, Salem. Telephone interview September 16, 1993.

Ron Reilly, Director Roosevelt Cluster Schools, Portland Public Schools. Telephone interview September 28, 1993.

Twila Schell, Volunteer Program Manager, Oregon Department of Human Resources, Pendleton. Telephone interview September 29, 1993.

Mary Helen Socolofsky, Business Teacher and Community Coordinator, Sprague High School, Salem/Keizer School District 24J. Telephone interview September 27, 1993.

Wendy Sorey, Counselor and Business Teacher, Echo High School, Echo School District 5. Telephone interview September 23, 1993.

Daisy Steele, Marketing Instructor, Sprague High School, Salem/Keizer School District 24J. Telephone interview September 27, 1993.

Peggy Upham, Parent, Roosevelt Middle School, Eugene Public Schools. Telephone interview September 22, 1993.

Kathy White, Program Coordinator, Oregon Professional Development Center, Eugene. Telephone interview September 21 1993.

Oregon School
Study Council
University of Oregon
1787 Agate Street
Eugene OR 97403

Nonprofit
Organization
US Postage
PAID
Eugene OR
Permit No. 63

OSSC BULLETIN